
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Rep. Norm Dicks' Statement on the FY2012

Agriculture Appropriations Bill

WASHINGTON- House Appropriations Committee Ranking Member Rep. Norm Dicks made the following comments regarding the Majority's proposed FY2012 Agriculture Appropriations bill:

"With an allocation that cuts -\$2.9 billion below the current level, the subcommittee has drastically reduced funding for food programs that serve women, children and the elderly and for the Food and Drug Administration.

"At a time when only 1 out of every 5 applicants can get a job, many Americans need help getting by. This bill slashes funding for WIC and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program, leaving more people to fend for themselves during the worst recession since the Great Depression. Our economy is showing positive signs of improvement, but with unemployment still hovering at 9%, it's certainly no time to be pulling the rug out from underneath folks who can least afford it.

"The cut to FDA is a perfect example of Republican's commitment to short-sighted budgeting. In the aftermath of several nationwide recalls, Democrats in Congress passed a food-safety bill

that ramped up activities at the FDA. This bill actually moves us backward in protecting our food supply and medical products – it is 12% below the current level and 21% below what the President requested.

“The Democrats on the Committee will continue to work with our Republican colleagues to assist in the Appropriations process and hopefully make this a better bill. However, in its current form, I cannot support a bill that is so short-sighted and inconsiderate of the needs of the less-fortunate.

Below is a brief summary of funding levels and other key provisions in the Agriculture Bill:

Total Allocation: \$17.25 billion | **-\$2.9 billion** below FY2011 Enacted | **-\$5 billion** below the President's FY2012 Request.

Food Assistance for Women, Children and the Elderly

WIC: The bill provides \$5.9 billion total, -\$833 million below the FY2011 enacted level and -\$1.49 billion below the President's request. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities estimates that at this level of funding WIC would have to turn away anywhere from 325,000 to 475,000 eligible low-income women and young children next year.

Commodity Supplemental Food Program: The bill provides \$139 million which is -\$16 million below the request and -\$19 million below FY2011.

Food Safety: [Recent polling](#) shows that an overwhelming majority (85%) of Americans support the government's role in ensuring food safety, with a large plurality (66%) supporting an increase – not a reduction – in food safety funding. However, the Majority has decided on the following:

Food and Drug Administration: The bill provides \$2.17 billion which is -\$572 million below the

request and -\$285 million below FY2011.

Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA: The bill provides \$973 million which is -\$38 million below the request and -\$37 million below FY2011.

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Food Aid: The bill provides \$1.22 billion which is -\$670 million below the request and -\$476 million below FY2011.

Food for Peace: The bill provides \$1.04 billion which is -\$650 million below the request and -\$457 million below FY2011.

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McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition: The bill provides \$180 million which is -\$21 million below the request and -\$19 million below FY2011.

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